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SABRE THRUSTS AT FREE-THOUGHT;

OR,

A DEFENCE OF DIVINE INSPIRATION.

BY

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WITH INTRODUCTION BY REV. THOMAS COBB.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN looking over the pages of this book, it is not difficult to discover the plan, the purpose, of the author, which we shall find both timely and useful, bringing before us in brief and readable form, considerations which show the unreasonableness of unbelief, and the soundness, fruitfulness and excellence of the Christian religion.

We continually meet with statements of this kind: "We are on the verge of great changes—our magazines, newspapers and reviews are full of unbelief—our young men are being lost in the mazes of skepticism"—which statements surely are exaggerated; for some of the best newspapers in Canada

contain as many articles, at least, in favor of the Christian religion as against it. It may be true, as Butler said long ago, "The evidence of religion not appearing obvious may constitute one particular part of some men's trial in the religious sense. . . . There seems no possible reason why we may not be in a state of moral probation, with regard to the exercise of our understanding upon the subject of religion, as we are with regard to our behaviour in common affairs." But we are thoroughly persuaded that unbelief, such as is alleged to exist among men of affairs, threatening the usefulness of churches, and the eternal interests of men, has its root, not in the structure of the intellect so much as in wilfulness—in neglecting to embrace that which is knowable, and to follow that which is revealed. It is here we discover the value of the present book. It is better to search for truth where it may be readily found than to give ourselves over to idle, dangerous, endless speculations. When Moses gave to men knowledge of God, and of

his will, he said, "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."—Deut. xxx. 11-15. The sacred writer maintained four thousand years ago that religious truth was accessible, near at hand, and if admitted into the understanding and heart would find instant and eternal response; that it is fitted to man's spiritual and immortal nature, fitted to regenerate society, and to nourish in the individual heart imperishable hope. To state this clearly and at large in language and argument suited to the present day, is the object of this book.

In Part First, the author dwells on objections and difficulties which Free-thought has urged against the Old Testament scriptures. Chapters

I. and II. dwell on the Pentateuch; III., on the historical books; IV., on science and the Bible; and V., on prophecy. It is not possible, in brief introductory remarks, to follow the author through so comprehensive an outline, nor to show the strength and abundance of evidences, arguments and resources in these "Sabre Thrusts at Free-thought." The book must be read in order to be valued. "Perhaps no book within the inspired volume," says the writer, "has withstood so furious and numerous assaults as those which constitute the Pentateuch;" and yet, relying alone on the marvellous discoveries within recent years, amid the ruins and monuments upon Egypt's sands and Assyria's plains the author is able to say, "If, in the coming ages, that which is now generally disbelieved, or ridiculed, should be established on the principles of truth, or if scientific discovery should revolutionize thought, still God's own inspiration shall stand every fiery test, and ever prove itself an impregnable stronghold of eternal truth." This strong statement reminds me of Gladstone's famous saying, writing on similar

topics, in "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scriptures:" "If the most greedily destructive among all the theories of the modern critics . . . were established as true, it would not avail to impair the great fact of the history of man, with respect to the Jews and the nations of the world; nor to disguise the light which those facts throw upon the pages of the sacred volume; nor to abate the commanding force with which, bathed, so to speak, in the flood of that light, the Bible invites, attracts and commands the adhesion of mankind."

Part Second contains chapters on the Gospels; the resurrection; faith; St. Paul's writings and the Book of Revelation. "As the Pentateuch is the great battlefield of the Old Testament, so also are the Gospels of the New. Unbelief has strenuously endeavored to make out a clear case against the writings of the Synoptists—first, on the ground that they are not genuine; second, they do not harmonize; third, the subject of them is a myth. . . . In the Gospels Christ is the

central figure; and it would be well for the traducers and calumniators to note his character and work and to make the comparison between those and the conduct and fruits of infidelity. On the one hand is the meek and lowly spirit; the patient resignation to the inevitable; the loving sympathy; the gentle Christian dignity and bearing, that enabled him when reviled to revile not again; and his tireless diligence and application to the work which his Father gave him to do"—to contrast all these things, all this magnificent line of thought and action, with the fruit in the lives of the unbeliever, atheist or infidel, would be a sabre-thrust indeed.

To follow the author in his remarks on faith and the writings of St. Paul, prepare you for the glow and warmth in which he approaches the end. "All through the ages as we ransack the pages of profane history, as well as ecclesiastical, courage with discretion was master upon every field, and the child of God needs a heaven-born hope, enabling him to confront the forces of evil in the world,

armed with the Spirit's two-edged sword, and at last to stand victorious upon the battlements of God through Jesus Christ."

We commenced these remarks by speaking of the unreasonableness of unbelief which rejects and would destroy all those moral forces which make for righteousness. But how mild our words are where our author girds himself with the strength of a giant: "The writings of Voltaire and Rousseau swept like the simoon's blast over the sunny face of France, blighting the spiritual life of the nation like a full-blown flower in a November frost." So shall it continue forever. As Carlyle said: "Religion cannot pass away. The burning of a little straw may hide the stars, but those orbs of light are still there, and will reappear." Equally steadfast are the objects and rewards of faith. "They that be wise shall shine as the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

THOMAS COBB.

PREFACE.

WE know not what estimate the literary world will place upon this work, but we can say in all humility that an earnest effort has been made on the part of the writer to influence not only the intellects, but also the hearts of men, in a manner that will stimulate their piety, by setting forth some of the triumphs of eternal truth over unbelief in every form, and over falsity in its hydra-headed hideousness.

A critical perusal of the inspired Word will at once enable the observant reader to discern that, although infidelity and free-thought have with fiery impetuosity assailed the disclosure of God's redeeming purposes to a lost humanity, and reduced its truths, as they fondly hoped, to

dust and ashes, yet, phoenix-like, it has arisen from the scattered particles of its supposed ruin, impregnated with the inspiring principles of renewed life and everlasting power.

May all who read realize that faith in the truths contained within the pages of the inspired volume, as well as in him whose face shines resplendent as the meridian sun through every hallowed page thereof, means translation into the sunburst of an unending day, the brow diademed with fadeless crown, amid the hallelujah choruses of the skies.

W. W. WALKER.

TORONTO, *January, 1898.*

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SABRE THRUSTS AT FREE-THOUGHT.

CHAPTER I.

The Teaching of the Pentateuch Vindicated.

PERHAPS no books within the inspired volume have withstood so furious and numerous assaults as those which constitute the Pentateuch, and yet, in the matchless wisdom of God, the opening verse has been so worded as to confound the enemies of the truth. With scientific research and discovery was established the fact that the earth was much older than was generally supposed. Illiterate and unthinking men, who were not friendly to divine truth, at once said that the Bible and were at variance, forgetting that it mattered not if the age of this planet were millions of years, multiplied by myriads yet again, still the first verse, which treats of the genesis of all things, thunders

forth with no uncertain sound or discordant note, "In the beginning" (without saying when it was) "God created the heaven and the earth," thus at once administering the death-blow to the superficial arguments of feather-headed free-thinkers.

Also, with regard to the days of creation, infidelity has said, even granting that the work was accomplished, as the first chapter of Genesis states, in six days, the impression is not only conveyed, but the writer emphatically asserts, that they were natural divisions of time, of twenty-four hours each, by saying that the evening and the morning were the first day, and so on through each succeeding one, whereas scientific men have almost unanimously agreed that each day of creation was a geological period covering perhaps many thousand years. The question now arises, Does this harmonize with the declaration of the Bible—the morning and evening were the first day? What constitutes a day in the sight of Almighty God? Let us turn to the pages of inspiration for an answer. A day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and

a thousand years as one day. We do well to remember that the mind of Infinity does not measure time as would the finite mind of man, for God can as readily comprehend the doings of millions of ages as man can the performances of a few hours.

Regarding the crowning work of creation, the fact of man's having been made from the dust of the earth has been severely criticised and fiercely assailed; but the theories of those who believe, and teach, that man has been evolved, or developed, from some lower form of organic life, has received a rude shock by the discoveries within recent years amid the ruins and monuments upon Egypt's sands and Assyria's plains. Gold rings set with precious stones were found a few years ago, in a mummy pit, in the former country, which have been proven by some of the most distinguished Oriental scholars to have been manufactured about six thousand years ago, and which are of decidedly better workmanship than those made twenty or thirty centuries later. This does not look as though man were less intelligent ages ago than at the present

moment, nor does it look as if he were gradually developing from a lower plane to a higher, but, on the contrary, it appears as though the development were already complete in this early stage of human history.

Again we have conclusive evidence of the maturity of the intellect of man in the surprisingly early and splendid civilization of Babylon — the construction of her massive walls, the grandeur of her public edifices, the paradisaical beauty of her gardens, and the astonishing degree to which the fine arts were cultivated.

Another startling evidence of the mental status of man in primitive times was furnished by the discovery of Dr. Bliss, which was nothing less than a hot blast furnace containing iron ore, thus proving that one thousand five hundred years before Christ the Amorites knew how to use the hot-air blast instead of cold air, anticipating the improvement in iron manufacture patented in 1828.

The Rosetta stone, which was discovered by M. Boussard, a French officer of Engineers under

Napoleon in 1799, has since proved of inestimable value in clearing away the mists of doubt relative to the past. It contains a trilingual inscription in Hieroglyphics, Demotic, and Greek, the latter furnishing a key for the interpretation of the others.

The inscription contains a decree in honour of Ptolemy Epiphanes by the priests of Egypt, assembled in solemn conclave at Memphis, on account of taxes owed by that consecrated body. The stone was set up one hundred and ninety-five years before Christ. The *cartouches* in the first and second inscriptions upon the tablet, which contained the name of the monarch, at once showed that the last inscription recorded the same truth as the others.

And now through the revelation made by God's witness, which he had called forth from its resting-place amid desert sands, where it had lain entombed for many ages, the destructive criticisms of skeptical minds were not only neutralized in their effects, but utterly annihilated.

Numerous other evidences are in existence of

an early intelligence, altogether equal to the most transparent and matured development of the present day along these lines, notable among them the power that elevated stones, thirty feet in length, six feet in width, and four feet in thickness, to a height of four hundred and eighty feet, in the construction of the Pyramid of Cheops. Some authorities say that electricity was used in elevating those enormous masses of granite so high in the air, others equally distinguished maintain that steam was the power used, whilst others as emphatically assert that it was the incline plane. None, however, know to a certainty what particular means were used, but all know beyond doubt that whatever it was, it was in every respect equal to the best known and most scientific motive power in use in these closing years of a remarkable epoch.

Another soul-convincing demonstration of early intellectual and inventive power in man was the discovery of the remains of a Telephone in India, which was proven to have been used nearly two thousand years before the dawn of the Christian era. Equally startling, and tend-

ing in the same direction, was the unearthing of a case of surgical instruments from the ruins of an ancient Eastern city, which were of exquisite workmanship, containing scalpels, lancets, probes, etc., claimed to have been equal in design and utility to those in use at the present day.

If, however, those who believe in the unfolding or development of man, from the lower to the higher plane, and also that life must precede life in some form or order, are not convinced by the astounding evidences produced as the result of research, then we will say that the Bible story of the creation of man will stand the test; and if the worst comes which can come, then the God who at the opportune moment called forth his stony witnesses from their winding-sheet of desert sand, that they might confound the enemies of the truth, will raise up living witnesses who will be able to reconcile the new teaching with the seventh verse of the second chapter of Genesis. Perhaps on the principle that as man was formed from the dust of the ground, or as the lower animal life preceded the higher, in the form of man, and as plant life preceded

animal life, the latter received its germinative power from the soil, thus practically coming therefrom, and the lower order of animal life, being gradually evolved from preceding plant life, God took the soulless animal, and breathed into its nostrils the breath of life or soul, and the higher order of what was still creation appeared originally in the first stages of its development made from the dust of the ground, now a living soul.

If in the coming ages that which is now generally disbelieved or ridiculed should be established upon the principles of truth, or if scientific discovery should revolutionize thought, still God's own inspiration shall stand every fiery test and ever prove itself an impregnable stronghold of eternal truth.

Again, we find that free-thought has been playing loose with the teaching contained within the fortieth chapter of the Book of Genesis, relative to the conspiracy of the chief butler and baker at Pharaoh's court, saying that the interpreting of the chief baker's dream by Joseph, that he would be hanged and beheaded, was

contradictory, and that the twenty-second verse explicitly says that it was done according to the interpretation of Joseph.

In order to correctly understand these matters it is necessary to go back as far as the period in which the first book of the Pentateuch was written, and study the manners and customs of the people at that time. On doing this we will find that the mode of dealing with condemned criminals was first to hang and then to behead, or the reverse, as it was not necessarily essential to suspend by the neck, as the waist served the purpose equally well, that of subjecting the body to the indignity of having the flesh plucked off it by the fowls of the air.

Thus we find in the very chapter which has been so severely assailed, a correct history of the prevailing custom in those early ages, another victory on the side of the forces of inspiration.

We shall now touch upon one of the greatest battlegrounds of the Bible, namely, the authorship of the Pentateuch. Was Moses really the author, or, if not, who was? Sir Wm. Dawson, and other scientists and theologians equally

distinguished, believe that Moses was the author. Infidelity has taken advantage of this, and, as the last chapter of Deuteronomy contains the obituary of Moses, asks the question, Could a dead man write his own death notice? We answer that under inspiration, with the prophetic element stirred up within him, it was perfectly feasible. Also, he might have written all of the five books attributed to him, and after his death some other hand could readily have added the closing chapter.

Again, there is a distinction between an author and an editor. Moses, with prophetic instinct, may have been the author or originator of every line, some one also may have been the editor or supervisor for publication. But why needlessly spend mental energy over the discussion of such a matter, or what difference does it make whether Moses or some one else wrote the Pentateuch; it is in every respect an authentic history of the times in which it was written, and if Moses talked face to face with God in Sinai, and received the tables containing the Moral Law, amid the thunderings and threatenings of

that holy mount, and, as mediator between God and man, delivered that to the collective people from which governments have framed their codes, and by which potentates and kings have regulated their lives, it matters not by whom it was recorded, for all can see that it bears upon its face the seal and imprimatur of the "Ancient of days."

Infidelity has taken a last shot at the truths of the Pentateuch, by assailing the verses which contain the account of the burial of Moses, declaring that it is preposterous that he should have died and been buried and no one, not even the children of Israel, know the place of his grave. It must, however, be borne in mind that the sixth verse of the last chapter of Deuteronomy does not say that the children of Israel did not know the place of his burial. We gather from the verse that they did, and common-sense endorses it. But those who came after them did not know its whereabouts, and in corroboration of the text neither do they until this day.

And now the greatest lawgiver of any age, and

the mightiest legislator of any period, having laid down the sceptre of his God-given power, the victorious and triumphant assertion rolls down through the corridor of the ages with the sound of storm-tossed waters and of Sinaitic thunderings: "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."

"And had he not high honour,—
 The hill-side for a pall,
 To lie in state while angels wait,
 With stars for tapers tall,
 And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes,
 Over his bier to wave,
 And God's own hand in that lonely land
 To lay him in the grave?"

"In that strange grave without a name,
 Whence his uncoffined clay
 Shall break again, oh, wondrous thought!
 Before the Judgment Day,
 And stand with glory wrapped around
 On the hills he never trod,
 And speak of the strife that won our life
 With the Incarnate Son of God.

"O lonely grave in Moab's land !
 O dark Beth-Peor's hill,
 Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
 And teach them to be still.
 God hath His mysteries of grace,
 Ways that we cannot tell ;
 He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
 Of him He loved so well."

CHAPTER II.

The Deluge and Passage of the Red Sea.

THE Pentateuch, upon which we have been commenting in the previous chapter, and which has proved victorious in spite of the furious assaults of satanic power, has derived its name from the two root-words Pente, five, and Teuchos, books, from its containing the five books of the law. One of its great cardinal truths is its history of the deluge, and as this has been held up to more ridicule than perhaps anything else within its pages, we have purposely left its discussion for this second chapter.

All men of whatever shade of opinion say, furnish us with sufficient evidence that a certain event has transpired, and we will at once accept its authenticity. Then we shall proceed at once to say that tradition, mythology and history teem with data regarding the deluge, which

was a submersion of the world, not necessarily general but certainly as far as inhabited.

First in order comes the Babylonians from among the Semites, with their version of this wondrous event, which bears a striking similarity to the Scripture narrative, the most important authority for which is the eleventh lay of the mythological epic, discovered by George Smith, Esq., and coming from the library of King Assurbanipal, dating from 660 B.C.; but Dr. Schrader says that the original from which this was translated was composed nearly as far back in the ages as 2000 B.C., whilst mythology itself in connection with this matter is much older.

Egypt also had its story of the deluge in an inscription of the archaic period Seti I., embodying a sentiment in perfect harmony with that in the Book of Genesis; also the Jews have their idea of the flood which is almost absolutely akin to the Babylonian. In the duration of the flood, however, they extended it to an entire solar year, but all their authorities coincide in attributing it to the exceeding sinfulness of man, and claim that

the assurance was given that there would never again be a recurrence of it.

Indian literature contains many stories of the deluge, chief among them one which, in two points at least, agrees with the Bible narrative, the introduction of animals into the ark, and the fact that seven days elapsed between the notice and the fulfilment.

Polynesian mythology and Grecian literature also contain references to the flood as destroying all but a few men.

Investigations have been made by scientific men among the American Indians concerning the above matter, with the following results: One hundred and twenty different tribes in North, South and Central America have, in some form or another, traditions or stories of a deluge, away back in the morning of the ages of man's existence, in which from one to eight persons were saved in an enormous canoe or boat.

And now if, in the face of this mass of evidence, a web, as it were, woven from tradition, mythology and historical fact, infidelity should still sneer at the idea of that upon which all kindreds

and peoples and tongues agree, then we hold them up in their piteous imbecility, not to ridicule and scorn, but to the pity and mercy of a long-suffering public.

In closing our remarks upon the deluge, we are just reminded that the sixth chapter of Genesis and second verse has all along through the circling years been a bone of contention between believers and unbelievers. We must confess that it is difficult to understand why free-thought has made a target of these words: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose." It is quite clear that in the former part of the verse, the Sethites, or posterity of Seth, is referred to, and they are called sons of God on the same principle that true believers are called children of God to-day. The Sethites had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and consequently led righteous lives, whereas, on the other hand, the Cainites were the posterity of a murderer, and consequently sunken to a very low moral plane, and steeped in degradation—the degenerate sons of a degenerate sire—and were

mere men. Nothing can be clearer or more simple than the teaching of the above verse, and certainly nothing so fallacious as to misinterpret the term sons and associate it with angelology, and the supernatural generally.

Another great historical truth that has had its baptism of fire is the passage of the Red Sea by the children of Israel (see verses twenty-first and twenty-second of the fourteenth chapter of Exodus). "And Moses stretched out^h his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left."

The place where the people encamped was Pihahiroth, over against Baalzephon, undoubtedly on the west side of the Gulf of Suez. At the point mentioned above, the arm of the sea which lay before them was but three or four leagues across, thus enabling them to pass through in a single night. Also, it was so shal-

low at this particular point that a very strong east wind would cause such an ebb as to leave the bottom exposed. The twenty-first verse gives color to this, and God caused the sea to go back through this agency. Again, the twenty-second verse states that the waters were as walls on either side. This is where infidelity takes hold and declares that there is contradiction. Let us look into the matter and see. The Red Sea is almost parallel with the line from the Arctic to the Antarctic Circle, or almost due north and south. Thus the effect of an east wind would not be to dry the arm or gulf before which the children of Israel were encamped, by driving the waters seaward, thus emptying the whole arm, for it would blow directly across, and any schoolboy knows that an east wind cannot drive opposing forces south, but, on the contrary, will drive them westward.

Again, the ridiculously fallacious teaching of those who believe that the gulf was cleared through the natural agency of an east wind, will be made apparent by the fact, that a hurricane which could sweep a body of water eighty

feet in depth clean off its bed of sand, would destroy everything in its path. The most powerful armies would be annihilated by its destructive fury. The two and a half millions of Israel, together with the thousands of Egypt's lordly chivalry, would be but as dust before its cyclonic force. But some one will say, perhaps, the wind blew solely upon the water, and not upon the land. If this was so, then the agency made use of was miraculous that would, in a distance of less than twelve miles, cut out a path through nearly fourteen fathoms of water, so that the hosts of God could pass through.

We, however, find the Almighty making use of natural agency largely in connection with his purposes and work, and also combining with it the miraculous when necessary, and again suspending all natural laws, and by the exercise of divine power calling forces hitherto unknown into being.

The passage of the Red Sea seems in reason's clear light to have been one of the great events of the ages in connection with God's dealings with his children, in which both natural and

miraculous agencies were employed. The piling of the waters in walls upon the right hand and on the left, and the consequent suspension of gravitation's laws, was essentially a miracle; and on the other hand, where the east wind blew almost directly across this notable arm of the sea, its scorching breath, peculiar to an Oriental clime, dried the bottom, so that sandalled pedestrians could pass over. This is natural law. Oh! flippant and weak-kneed infidelity, why question the illimitable power of him who has all the forces of nature at his command, and who doeth according to his will among the armies of the skies.

Amid the assaults which have been made upon various passages contained in the different books of the Pentateuch, the twenty-fifth chapter of Numbers has perhaps had more than its share. Very little attention is paid by free-thinkers to the opening verses, which treat of the illicit commerce between the Israelites and Moabites, and the seduction of the former to idolatry. But the moment the wrath of the Almighty was kindled against Israel because

many had bowed down to heathen gods and worshipped them, and the Israelites had virtually given themselves over to Baelpeor, and punishment followed, as the ninth verse informs us, by the destruction with plague of twenty-four thousand of the sinning people, they become clamorous and aggressive in assailing the mercy of God, declaring that nothing but a harsh and arbitrary being would inflict the death penalty to such a degree. Also, their opposition is intensified by the fact that when Phineas slew Zimri and Cozbi for their transgression, his act was approved by God himself, who promoted to honor a bloodthirsty and cruel man.

The argument, then, is: the Bible represents God to be a merciful being, whereas his actions prove him to be the reverse. Now, let us take the words of God's own inspiration, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and analyze them. First, the soul is the man, the being or personality, or, in philosophical language, the ego, I, or self. Second, sin is the transgression of a righteous law, God-given. Then the man or individual that transgresses divine law shall die.

But some will say that it is spiritual death that is here implied. With regard to this we must remember that these scriptural terms are very comprehensive, covering all the ground, and that not only spiritual but also physical death is meant. The one may be inflicted, or the other, but it certainly covers both. Then regarding sin, we may add that every avowed skeptic under the canopy of heaven will admit that the sin of the Israelites was of an intensely aggravated character. Thus coming as they did under the ban of the law, the infliction of a death penalty was simply legal. An earthly autocrat can frame any law he desires, and execute any punishment that is well pleasing to him, without one of his subjects daring to question his action. Let us, then, ask what of the Infinite One, who controls the motions of a hundred millions or more of worlds, and who has at his bidding the disciplined hosts of a universe, and who has upon his vesture and his thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Also regarding the slaughter of the twenty-

four thousand Israelities, as the punishment of their transgression, God performed this act, that through it two and a half millions of people might be saved. Thus our readers will at once see that the act of God was not only in the strictest sense legal, but perfectly natural and abounding in mercy. It is at once apparent that the arguments of infidels concerning this matter are exceedingly debilitated and contemptibly weak. In spite of them, the great central truths of the books of the law shine forth with undimmed lustre, resplendent as the sun in his noon-day glory, reflecting the face of him before whom cherubim and seraphim fall down with veiled faces, crying *holy*, and proving the mercy of God to be high as heaven, deep as hell, and vast as infinity itself. As we comprehend these truths, we catch the inspiration of the gifted Addison when he composed the following immortal lines:

“When all thy mercies, oh, my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view I'm lost
In wonder, love, and praise.

"Unnumbered comforts on my soul
Thy tender care bestowed,
Before my infant heart conceived
From whom those comforts flowed.

"When in the slippery paths of youth
With heedless steps I ran,
Thine arm unseen conveyed me safe,
And led me up to man.

"Through hidden dangers, toils and deaths,
It gently cleared my way,
And through the pleasing snares of vice,
More to be feared than they.

"Through every period of my life
Thy goodness I'll pursue,
And after death in distant worlds
The pleasing theme renew.

"Through all eternity to Thee
A grateful song I'll raise,
But, oh ! eternity's too short
To utter half thy praise."

CHAPTER III.

Joshua as a Soldier, the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets, and the
Theocracy of Israel.

THE historical books of the Bible sublimely open with the appointment of Joshua to the command of the hosts of Israel by God himself. The choice of the Ruler of the universe is but another evidence that he never places his hand upon the wrong man, and in this particular case his infinite wisdom was specially demonstrated to the world by the choice of one of the greatest military strategists of any age as leader, just as the people were entering upon the conquest of the promised land.

As Canne crowned Hannibal; Borodino, Napoleon; Waterloo, Wellington, so Ai immortalized Joshua as the master of the art of war. His plans for the attack, his disposition of the troops under his command, and at last his resolute promptness and keen perception which enabled him to discern the opportune moment,

and to at once strike a crushing and annihilating blow, held him up to the admiration of the war specialists everywhere, and conspired together to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of God's chosen people.

It will be noticed that although miraculous agency was employed in the siege and fall of Jericho, yet in the capture of Ai the Israelites were thrown upon their own resources, after having been humbled for their presumption in first attacking a city garrisoned by twelve thousand trained men with only three thousand warriors. The wisdom of the Great Eternal is once more seen in thus throwing them into that position in which they would be compelled to exercise courage, hardihood and endurance, and by the development of these qualities thus prepare themselves for the battles and marches and arduous toils that lay before them in the subjugation of the Canaanitish nations.

We must not pass over the crossing of the Jordan in silence, as through the folly and weakness of some who have endeavored to explain

the matter away upon the lines of natural law infidelity has made this a special point of attack, and in reply to these assaults we will not only say that it was a miracle, but also that it was one of the occasions upon which the Almighty especially manifested his power to the children of men.

On ordinary occasions it would scarcely require a miracle to dry up the bed of the Jordan, as it was so shallow. Indeed, one of the greatest scientists on earth has said that for two thousand years it has been so nearly dry at the fords that immersion has been absolutely impossible except during the periods of freshets. But at this time in barley harvest, presumably in the month of April, when Jordan always overflowed its banks and was in full flood, the stopping of the waters as though an enormous invisible dam had been constructed, sending them back once again, in violation of gravitation's law, toward their fountain-head, was a miracle so stupendous that it does not require the expenditure of nerve tissue to endeavor to prove it. The whole matter is tersely summed up by

the Psalmist of Israel in the cxiv. Psalm, where he shows the power of God, more especially in the third and fifth verses: "The sea saw it and fled: Jordan was driven back. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou was driven back?" The fiat of omnipotence has gone forth, the wand of the Almighty has touched the liquid elements, and they have retreated in consternation, proclaiming with sullen roar the might and majesty of a triumphant and victorious God.

Again, concerning the authorship of the book which stands first in the historical list, free-thought says Joshua is not the author. We meet it on its own platform and say that is substantially correct. Then it says the Bible classifies this as the Book of Joshua, therefore there is something wrong. We, however, find on analyzing the matter that the history contained therein is one of Joshua himself as leader of God's chosen heritage, treating of his victorious battles, his conquest of the goodly land and the manifestations of the divine presence to him and his. Thus we find that on the human side

Joshua is the central figure. The book treats of his life, his work and his death, at the age of one hundred and ten years. In no case does the Bible say that Joshua was the author of the book, but it calls it the Book of Joshua, because of the matter it contains, which is substantially correct, and the carping of infidelity has been silenced forever along this line by the discovery in Egypt of the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets within recent years, which contain one hundred and seventy letters from Palestine, and the names of kings who were contemporary with Joshua, and thus confirming for all time the historical accuracy of the Book of Joshua.

One stone was discovered by Dr. Bliss, in May, 1892, which contained inscriptions on both sides; the Tel-el-Amarna Tablets having been discovered in 1887 by a peasant woman, one hundred and eighty miles south of Cairo, and containing some letters from Lachish to the Pharaohs of Egypt. These were compared with the tablet discovered by Dr. Bliss, and, to the delight of biblical scholars everywhere, they harmonized to a nicety.

The intelligent observer will at once see that the art of writing was known and practised in pre-Israelitish times. The date of the Moabite stone is said to be from 900 B.C., but the presence of a seal of Amenhotep III. establishes the time of the Lachish tablets at 1415 B.C.

Those who have maintained in the past that the Books of the Law could not have been written at the dates specified, as writing was not known in Palestine until the ninth century before Christ, will feel humiliated to have it proven, as it now is, that the Israelites were always, both during their bondage in Egypt and their sojourn in Canaan, surrounded by nations of critical culture who were adepts in the art of writing. Also, the theory that the records of the Old Testament were derived from mere tradition is now exploded by recent discovery and scattered to the winds of heaven. This is all but another evidence of the triumph of God's own inspiration over every theory and system of falsity and error.

" Engraven in eternal brass
The endless promise shines,
Nor shall the powers of darkness raze
Those everlasting lines."

Another point upon which there has been conflicting opinions in the past, and upon which there is a great deal of misunderstanding, even among good people, in these closing years of a scientific decade, is the relationship of the theocratic government of Israel to the secular governments of to-day.

As the historical books of the Bible treat of the theocracy—that is, a government with God at its head, from the Greek words, *θεος*, God, and *κρατειν*, strong, to rule, etc.—and God's dealings with his chosen people, we judge it wise at this juncture to look critically into the matter and discover, if possible, the true import of the divine teaching.

It will be remembered that as God was the director-in-chief of his people Israel, that for this reason the government was not absolutely secular, and all that was required in consequence of this was the rendering unto God a tenth of the yearly returns, both of the fruit of the field and the increase of the flock. It must be borne in mind that there was no land or school tax; the tenth was all that was demanded or ex-

pected, and to those who think that the command is for the citizens of countries under the secular governments of to-day, we will say that they are very much mistaken, as there is a vast difference between the existent conditions of things thousands of years ago, before Saul was chosen king of Israel, and to-day, to say nothing about the intensely spiritual character of the one and the temporal character of the other.

The sum total of all expense in connection with the theocracy was one-tenth, as commanded. On the same principle, if applied in this day, the tenth would include all taxes paid for the support of the State and its institutions.

But though the above is substantially correct, yet we will add that although *we* in this age, under monarchical and republican forms of government, are not commanded to give a tenth, yet blessed is he who will of his own free-will do so. It is certainly more creditable for us to do a thing voluntarily than to do it because we cannot help it, and if there were more volunteers along this line many a problem that is now difficult of solution to the Church of God would

speedily be solved, and the blessing of the lowly Nazarene would descend in copious showers upon his faithful followers, and some seer, as in the olden time, would catch up an inspiration from on high, saying, "Lo, I see with the Son of David a great host, and it seems as though it were the host of God." And, above all, we should stand approved by him at whose gaze worlds will flee away and countless multitudes shall blanch in terror. "Gather the tithes in my storehouses, and prove me therewith, saith the Lord, and see if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour out upon you blessings that there will not be room to contain."

There has been comparatively little criticism or doubt expressed relative to the historical accuracy of the remaining books in this department of Biblical literature. Even the free-thinker admits that it is history, although he will not admit that there is a Divine arm within it. We will see what Napoleon I. says about it. Upon a certain occasion a staff officer said to this man with intellect of giant mould, "I do not believe that there is a God." His com-

mander turned sharply upon him, saying, " Fool ! read history."

If one of earth's greatest minds saw the hand of God revealed in profane history, let us ask, What of that which is sacred ? We have all noticed, no matter how dense our perceptions, in the study of the Seven Years' War and of the Napoleonic wars, and others as well, that destiny was being shaped and certain conditions fashioned which were destined, sooner or later, in God's good time, to revolutionize society. This is conclusive evidence that a Supreme Hand was upon the helm and that a Master's eye guided the vessel amid the so-called chances of war. If our conceptions enabled us to discern this in the secular sense and in connection with the doings of men of blood, how much more in God's dealings with his chosen inheritance ?

Free-thought has made a furious assault upon the second Book of Chronicles, in connection with Solomon's asking wisdom from God, and receiving it, and then, by his actions in after years, proving himself more foolish than the average man. We admit at this particular stage

that along certain lines he acted most unwisely, at times being guilty of the greatest folly. But neither infidelity, nor any other system of error, can place the pointer upon a single case where, in the capacity of judge, he did not manifest consummate wisdom and judgment. Now the question at issue is, Did Solomon ask for general or special wisdom? Let us note the reading of the received text. In second Chronicles, chapter one eighth verse, he says, "Give me now wisdom ~~and~~ knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?" It is quite evident from the reading of this verse that the king is thinking of his position as judge alone, and fearing that he should not be able to render just judgment, he asks God for discernment and discretion along this particular line. Evidence of this is in the eleventh verse, the wording of which proves that God interpreted the petition of his servant in this way, and God said to Solomon, "Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth or honour, nor the life of thine enemies,

neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayst *judge* my people, over whom I have made thee king."

This proves beyond all doubt that the wisdom asked for and received was of a special judicial character; thus free-thought has missed its mark, and instead of scoring a point here has but proved its hollow superficiality; and David's son, though erring grievously at a later day, still preserved inviolate unto the end his God-given discernment in the disposition of cases along legal lines.

CHAPTER IV.

Science and the Bible, and the Immortality of the Soul.

A MUCH favoured argument of infidelity is that science and the Bible are not in harmony the one with the other, and that the most recent discoveries along these lines tend to weaken the teaching of revelation, so called. That this is untrue is at once evident, not only by the teaching of the Book of Genesis, but also by the saying of Job under inspiration, when he gave utterance to the astounding fact that ages ago he clearly understood the position occupied by this planet, amid the unnumbered millions of suns and systems and constellations which bespangled the universe; whilst ages later men were completely befogged concerning this matter, some of the ancient philosophers teaching that it was absolutely impossible for a material substance to rest upon nonentity.

Also, the Chaldee taught that this planet rested upon the waters. Modern science, however, has definitely settled the matter by its declaration, with accompanying proofs, that the earth is swung off in space, revolving upon its own axis, as one of the many worlds which go to make up the solar system, of which the sun is centre. Let us hear what hoary-headed patriarchal Job says, long before young science first marked its natal hour: "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing," precisely where modern science hangs it. The above declaration will be found in the xxvi. chapter of the Book of Job, and the seventh verse.

Again, the doctrine of resurrection, life and immortality, as taught by Job, where he breaks forth into the following sublime utterance: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another," has been held up to ridicule and

contempt. Regarding the former we need not say much, as all around us we have not only that which is typical of a new life, but we have resurrection itself—the springing grass, the budding trees, all passing from the death of winter to the life of spring. If, then, this principle prevails in a material sense, in a world of matter, we need not waste time in showing that it can be applied, or that it actually prevails in any sense or condition.

With regard to the doctrine of immortality, a witness to it, in literature, philosophy and life is given by the Rev. Geo. A. Gordon, of Boston, in an admirable volume, a brief synopsis of which we shall give in the reviewer's words, to strengthen our argument:—

“The present volume treats with consummate skill one of the profoundest problems of the universe. It gathers from the past the testimony of the ages to the doctrine of the immortality of man. In its pages the Divine voice is heard along the highways of history, caught by the loftiest spirits of the race, and passed onward through their resonant human-

ity, touching the individual soul with the original utterance of God, all but completely blended with the grand responses and reverberations of the grateful heart of mankind.

Not everyone can range for himself through the almost boundless domain of literature. Hence the world owes a debt of gratitude to men who, like the author and Matthew Arnold, spread the knowledge of the best thinking of the highest minds among the people. Our author interprets first, with deep insight, the testimony of the old Hebrew prophets upon the doctrine of immortality. Not dimly and vaguely does he find it set forth in psalm and prophecy, but with strong and positive assurance. He next summons the testimony of the great poets of all time. From Homer, Dante, Wordsworth, Shakespeare, Browning and Tennyson, he cites the strong corroboration of that primal instinct of the race, grasping after God and immortality. The voice of philosophy, of faith and reason, is next summoned. In Socrates, Plato and Origen, from Butler, Kant and Lotze, deepest confirmation of this immortal yearning is found. The argument

of St. Paul is expanded and unfolded, and in the teaching of Jesus Christ is found its highest demonstration. The whole book is characterized by an elevation of thought, and a strength and beauty of diction, in keeping with the august theme treated. The author winds up by quoting the following grim, strong poem of W. E. Henley :

“ ‘ Out of the night that covers me,
 Black as the pit from pole to pole,
 I thank whatever gods may be,
 For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,
 I have not winced or cried aloud ;
 Under the bludgeonings of chance
 My head is bloody, but not bowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears,
 Looms but the horror of the shade,
 And yet the menace of the years
 Finds, and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
 How charged with punishment the scroll,
 I am the master of my fate,
 I am the captain of my soul.’ ”

Mr. Gordon says this surely is the desperate expression of a faith intrinsically great. The primacy of soul could hardly receive more powerful utterance, and the man who is so certain of the soul should not find it difficult to rest in the deepest certainty of God.

This doctrine of immortal and eternal life was strongly endorsed by Victor Hugo, who on one occasion was invited to attend a banquet, held in the gay and fashionable city of Paris, which was attended by the *elite* of society, many of whom were at that time representatives of free-thought in France. Said he, as he rose to speak impromptu: "There are voices welling up within my inmost soul that teach me of immortality and a life beyond the grave." As he proceeded with his sublime and eloquent utterances, a hush as of death fell upon the entire party. It seemed as though the speaker were inspired of God for the occasion, and all sat in awe under the shadow of his power.

Napoleon administered a stinging rebuke to his aide-de-camp on one memorable morning, as they walked through the art gallery of the

Louvre. Said the aide, as he halted before a famous picture, "Sire, this painting is immortal." "How long will it last?" said the man of mighty genius. "Five hundred years was the reply." "*And this, and this,*" said Napoleon with a sneer, "you call immortality." This master of the art of war, one of the greatest military strategists of any age, and one of the mightiest intellects that ever grappled with thought, had just and true conceptions of this wondrous doctrine.

Mythology also teaches important lessons along this line, but some will say of what use is it. Let it be remembered, however, that behind the myth is the golden truth, and behind the shadow is the substance. It treats of the manner in which disembodied spirits accost Charon, the grim ferryman, toss him a coin, and ask him to row them over the River Styx into the immortalities beyond. More conspicuous than this, however, has been the customs that have prevailed in the past, as recorded by history, in connection with peoples and tribes, which point conclusively to the fact that they implicitly believed in a future state, such as that of the Oriental people, who upon the death

of a friend at once placed a coin in the mouth of the departed, to pay for safe transit over the last stream into the boundless beyond, and the prevalent custom among our own Indian tribes of placing arms in the graves of their dead with which to hunt the buffalo and deer in the happy hunting grounds over death's dark stream. Also African explorers speak of having met with tribes in the heart of the Dark Continent who placed within the tent which was erected over their embalmed dead implements of war and the chase for use in the future state.

Thus we find the voice of mythology, the voice of history, and the voice of reason, all proclaiming with clarion blast the universal belief in the doctrine of a future state, and of the immortality of the soul.

. . . "Plato, thou reasonest well :
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after *immortality* ?

. . . Why shrinks the soul
Back on itself, and startles at destruction ?"

'Tis the divinity that Hugo voiced in Parisian banquet that "stirs within us, that points out an hereafter and intimates eternity to man."

CHAPTER V.

Testimony to the Genuineness of Prophecy.

PROPHECY, like many other departments of God's Word, has received its share of hostile criticism, and yet the writings of the seers of old stand forth in their glorious literary dress, teaching that which, in most cases at least, has been fulfilled to the very letter, thus proving its truthfulness, that it is indeed a foretelling, or telling forth, of scenes to be enacted at a later date, and of events that were to transpire in coming generations.

In the visions of Ezekiel and Daniel, among the greater prophets; the warnings of Jonah and the reproofs of Malachi, among the lesser, we have sublime thought, and strong diction, and eloquent language, stamping it at once as the finest production of past ages.

During the sojourn of Dr. Franklin in Paris,

he was invited to attend an evening party, where were present a number of ladies and gentlemen, representing the cream of free-thinking French society. They soon commenced a conversation on the merits and demerits of the Bible, chiefly the latter, as we might suppose. One said, as a piece of literature it was a total failure. Another said the grammar was faulty and the diction feeble; and a third declared its teachings to be false. Dr. Franklin listened in silence for a time, but having previously told some of the party that he had recently read a new book which interested him very much, was asked by the company to read a portion of it, as they had little doubt that whatever pleased the Doctor would be good. He at once complied with the request, and, having finished the chapter selected, asked the opinion of those present regarding it. The first speaker said that it was the choicest literature he had ever heard, whilst the second declared it to be superb in every particular; others testifying to the correctness of the grammar and the purity of the style.

Dr. Franklin was asked to state who was

the author of so splendid a production. He at once affirmed that what he had read was the prayer of the Prophet Habakkuk. The surprise and chagrin of the fashionable company may easily be imagined. They had really never read the Word of God, and were unable to form any conception of its beauty and value. The trouble all along the lines with the votaries of free-thought and infidelity has been that their knowledge of that which they presumed to judge was too superficial to enable them to see its grandeur and feel its power. Strange that men should judge and condemn that which they do not know, or pronounce that shallow or untrue which no plummet line can fathom unless tipped with the sinker of omnipotence.

In connection with prophecy and its teachings, infidelity seems to be peculiarly puzzled over the visions of Nebuchadnezzar, and declares that they represent nothing more than an ordinary nightmare. Now, we admit this to be true, if Daniel's predictive interpretation of the matter is not fulfilled to the letter; and if it is fulfilled we have the assurance from more than

one free-thinker that the proof is sufficient and the evidence strong enough to warrant the belief that the dream was of divine import, and nothing more or less than a revelation to man.

After exhaustive and painstaking labour in thoroughly ransacking the pages of ancient secular history, and comparing their teachings with prophecy, as set forth in the interpretation of the king's dream, we are convinced that, in the light of history, the construction placed upon it was substantially correct, and unbelief is hopelessly entangled in its own trap, and judged out of its own mouth.

It is as clear as the sun at noonday that the first and greatest kingdom spoken of by the prophet was the Chaldean or Babylonish, represented by the head of the image. The second, the Medo-Persian, under Cyrus, symbolized by the breast and arms of silver. The third, the Grecian or Macedonian, under Alexander the Great, shadowed forth by the belly and thighs of brass; and, fourth, the great Roman power, represented by the legs of iron. In the fortieth verse of the second chapter of Daniel, we have a

splendid description of the enormous power of Rome, as breaking in pieces and subduing all things.

Again, in the forty-fourth verse : " And in the days of these kings " (or in the midst of these great world empires) " shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, but which shall break and consume all earthly powers and stand for ever." This is clearly the Church or the spiritual kingdom of God, of which Christ is the chief corner-stone, elect, precious. Then because of the interpretation of this immortal dream, rewards were lavished upon him who with mind endowed with clearer spiritual insight than falls to lot of man in the ordinary walks of life, was enabled to interpret, in perfect harmony with reason and history, the mysterious things of God.

Again, with regard to the vision of Daniel as recorded in the seventh chapter, the meaning of the original Hebrew text of the second verse, where the four winds strove upon the great sea, is tumultuousness, turbulence, political commotion, out of which military despotisms rise

in great power. Then the eagle's wings of the first beast showed the rapidity of the Chaldean conquests, when Egypt, Judea, Phœnicia, and Arabia were overrun. "I beheld," said the prophet, "until the wings were plucked," symbolizing the reverses which caused the loss of Lydia, Media and Persia.

The second beast, like unto a bear, represented the ferocious Persian power, the three ribs in the mouth of which signified the grinding of Babylon, Lydia and Egypt by their relentless conquerors. The third beast, like a leopard, with four wings, showing the astonishing rapidity with which the Macedonian armies under Alexander overrun surrounding kingdoms, the four heads typifying the partition of the empire, at the death of this great strategist, into four parts under his own generals. The fourth power, also shadowed forth by a beast, was that tremendous empirical fabric whose governmental system centred in the city of the Seven Hills, the ten horns of which signified the division of the empire into ten kingdoms, on the death of Theodosius the Great. The

twenty-fourth verse of the seventh chapter at once confirms this.

Also the little horn which appeared among the others refers undoubtedly to and typifies the Papal power, and the plucking up of the three horns by the roots, the seizure of Ravenna, Lombardy, and Rome, and then the restraining judgments of the Lord God Almighty, in the person of the ancient of days, upon anti-Christian hierarchies and powers, all culminating in the matchless climax contained in the twenty-seventh verse: "And the kingdom, and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

An important lesson is to be learned from the life and manly conduct and undaunted courage of the Prophet Daniel. This, coupled with implicit faith and unwavering loyalty to God, made him as he stood before foreign potentates, though an alien and a captive, a wondrous influence for good. The spotless purity of his character was

a ceaseless rebuke to the licentiousness of an Oriental Court. His quiet, dignified demeanor, and countenance fairer than his fellows, frank and bright, testified powerfully and eloquently to his hourly walk and communion with his God. No marvel, then, that God revealed himself to such a man, and gave him favour in the sight of kings, so that at last like righteous Joseph in Egypt, political preferment was his and the honors that descend from God. If blind unbelief that always errs will but open its sightless orbs to the touch of the wand of omnipotence, and see and believe, then the Eternal Spirit will reveal his power, and the pathway toward the rest that remaineth for the people of God shall be illuminated by the presence of him who is the light of the Apocalyptic city. Also, if sinful man will stand forth and dare to be a Daniel, in the possession of a purpose true, obeying God's commands, he who made Joseph prime minister of all Egypt and Daniel first president of the great Chaldean Commonwealth, will, if the consecration is whole-souled, the life pure, and the faith

steadfast, lead not perhaps to political honor, that might not be best, not perhaps to earthly fame and worldly distinction, but to be the child of a King, and heir to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away.

Again, regarding prophecy, we might say, supposing ages ago some one of that race known as mound-builders, who inhabited a part at least of this North American continent, predicted that in 1497 Canada would be discovered by Cabot; that in 1710 the English would invade the country and storm Port Royal; that in 1759, after a terrific conflict, in which 2,200 would be slain, together with their leaders Wolfe and Montcalm, Quebec, the Gibraltar of the West, would be taken; that in 1763, the Treaty of Paris would be signed, in which Canada would be formally ceded to Britain; that in 1812, '13 and '14, there would be war between the United States and Great Britain, during the progress of which Canada would be invaded by the American armies, and the battles of Queens-ton Heights, Lundy's Lane, Chrysler's Farm,

Chauteaguay, and others, would be fought, and as the result of them a better relationship and more permanent peace established; that in 1866 there would be a union of all the Canadian provinces, with the result of the establishment of the confederated Dominion of Canada, and that in the year 2000 A.D., its population would be 100,000,000.

And now as it is clearly apparent that every prediction has been fulfilled but the last, is it, therefore, reasonable to suppose for one brief moment that as every other of the predictions had been verified at the time indicated, we would refuse to accept the prophecy relating to the one remaining; the very supposition is ridiculous.

We now pass from the purely secular to the spiritual, the former teaching an important lesson in its bearing upon the latter. Reasoning along the same line, we have the following: such as Jeremiah's foretelling the overrunning of Judea by hostile armies, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of the people; Joel telling forth how the judgments of God would descend upon the enemies of his people, and how

hostile nations would be destroyed; Obadiah predicting the overthrow of Edom; and Micah, the incarnation of the Son of God, together with the founding and expansion of his mystic kingdom and his mighty conquest.

Every one of these prophecies has been fulfilled to the very letter, including all the Messianic predictions of the Old Testament. This alone is incontrovertible evidence of the truth of prophecy. If, however, after perusing these lines some one still doubts, we would say, in the language of Napoleon, *Fool, read history*. Thus if the imagined forecasts of pre-historic man proved themselves to be substantially correct, and we are forced to believe that the one remaining will at the time appointed also verify itself on the same ground, history reveals the fact that all those utterances of the seers of old have proved themselves to have been divinely inspired by their literal fulfilment, and if there should be one yet remaining unfulfilled, is not the verification of the others substantial and logical proof that in God's good time any remaining will be fulfilled.

We have purposely left until last the recording of a few comments upon the greatest of all the books of prophecy, namely, Isaiah. During a ministry of fifty years, he uttered some of the sublimest truths ever recorded in any literature. With regard to the last chapters of this book we will say nothing, believing that the higher criticism has its place, and that this ground rightfully belongs to it.

The first verse of the book contains the key to the entire fabric: "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah." This at once gives us the scope of the whole book.

The first assault of infidelity is on the authorship of the opening chapters, its votaries knowing that if they could prove that Isaiah did not write the first half of the book ascribed to him, the last half was all right, and they had given prophecy a heavy blow. We will not, however, concede that this is even shrewd, for if Isaiah had never penned a line thereof, it is still clear that a true prophet was the author, for its

orthodoxy is proven by the fulfilment of its predictions, and what difference would it make who the writer was? But we have only to know the character of Isaiah and his writings, and by making a careful comparison, will at once see that they have been written by a man of high social position, great independence in thought and action as the outgrowth of it, strong diction, eloquent language, and dignified and elevated style. The prophet Isaiah was just such a man as this, and we must bear in mind that if he were writing under the influence and dictation of the Spirit his would still be that same lofty style which characterized his ordinary work. This we take as conclusive evidence that the theory generally accepted is substantially correct.

Again, the fourth chapter of this book has been subjected to ridicule because of its teachings; the chief thought in connection with it is contained in the second verse: "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be glorious and beautiful." This is clearly a Messianic prediction relating to the Christ of God: in the fulness of

time the eternal Son came. This ground has been taken by Delitzsch, the greatest of the German school of theologians, and also by Hengstenburgh.

In the twenty-first chapter and ninth verse, the prophet in his usual strong forcible manner, predicted the overthrow of Chaldee: "Babylon is fallen, and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken to the ground." This prophecy was fulfilled to the very letter, a crushing blow to the arguments of free-thought. At the very time stipulated, the Medes and Persians attacked the city and stormed it, overthrowing the established government and completely revolutionizing the administration.

We would advise infidelity to critically study the literature of the ages, and especially to ransack the pages of ancient secular history, and it will discover truths that will utterly destroy the foundation-stone of its own teaching.

One of the most pitiable and lamentable sights that we behold, as we stand upon the threshold of the twentieth century, is to find second or third class, or low grade research,

cloaked under the guise of first class English, which we find far too frequently in the literature of free-thought. Some, however, we find willing to modify their former belief by admitting the New Testament, and discarding the Old, arguing that it has no place in the new dispensation. The weakness of the argument, and the foolishness of the doctrine, is at once apparent when we consider the fact that this would do away with the moral law, from which every civilized government on earth has framed its code, and which is the very bond that holds society together, the sundering of which would bring anarchy, with its twin sister, a reign of terror. The Old Testament Word is now before us in all its sublimity and grandeur—a heaven-inspired reality—backed up by science, history and reason, endorsed by the highest teaching of any age or any reputable school. The influence and effect of this Word has revolutionized systems and sent a flood of light throughout a darkened world. Every form of unbelief goes down before it in utter ruin, thrones and dynasties stand upon it, no form or system of govern-

ment can exist without it. The power that backs home that word is the power that controls the constellations of the skies and the galaxies of the heavens, and the universal empire of the highest ; yea, that word is the magnetic power that led our fathers to glory only in the cross of Christ, which towers above the wrecks of time, and which confounded the cunning craft and evil devices of men who fear not God, neither honor the reigning power, who are enemies to every organized system under the star-spangled heavens. That word is truly the power that has led us, and will continue to lead us, unto our fathers' God, and which will guide us into the encircling light of a joyous, gladsome eventide, to the shores of the eternal morrow.

Thomas Carlyle, in commenting on religion and infidelity, said religion cannot pass away. The burning of a little straw may hide the stars, but those orbs of light are still there and will reappear, therefore be not disturbed by infidelity. Also Herbert Spencer, who has not always been considered a friend to religious truth, says : " If there were not a God we would be

compelled to invent one that justice might be meted out to sinful men."

Again, the testimony of philosophy is convincingly on the side of Revelation. Those who are best read therein, admit that the new philosophy, so called, is but the old, including Plato and Aristotle, rehabilitated, and that in every form, especially in the idealist, is taught the fact that reason endorses the sentiment that man can be approximately perfect, whereas the Bible says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"—a striking harmony between reason and inspiration.

Again, it has been demonstrated by one of the greatest authorities on the origin of language, namely, Dr. McLean, that atheism has no medium through which to express itself, for in all languages there are roots and words, indicative of Christianity and religion, in some form. Thus reasoning from the above premise we arrive at this conclusion, that every time infidelity makes use of any language, this very medium through which it endeavors to convey

thought, gives it the lie, and proves it an unmitigated farce.

As the voice of science and philosophy has endorsed the teachings of the Scriptures of God, so also has the testimony of the most famous of the world's astronomers, Sir John Herschel, in awe acknowledged the stupendous work of the Divine Architect; and as he swept the heavens with his powerful telescope, rendered his tribute of praise to the One who alone held illimitable power and exercised universal authority.

General O. M. Mitchell, in calling out new worlds, from the unknown to the known, gave expression to some such sentiment as this: "Engaged as I am in the department of astronomical science, in viewing worlds as yet unexplored, and in looking into the faces of suns the centres of other systems, in all such I see, mirrored in glory, the face of the Omnipotent One."

Thus we see on every hand, despite the fact that the fleshly arm of unbelief has been lifted in opposition, nature, art, science, philosophy, mythology, history, reason, the star-spangled

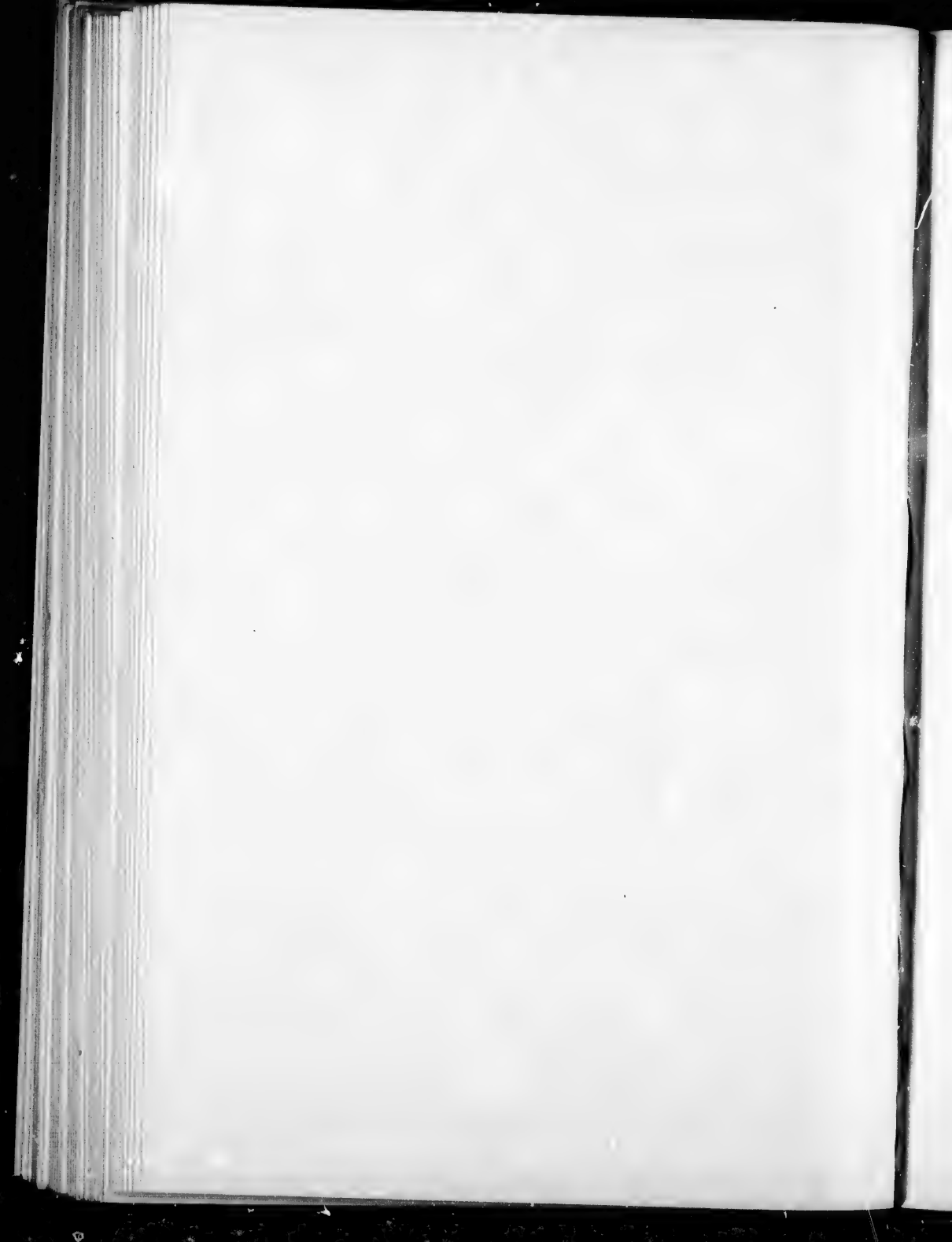
78 SABRE THRUSTS AT FREE-THOUGHT.

heavens, and everything, proclaim, as the sound
of many waters, the Hand that framed the
universe is Divine.

“ Jesus doth reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journey run ;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till suns shall rise and set no more.”

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PART SECOND.



PART SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

Testimony to Genuineness of the Gospels, the Doctrine of the Trinity, and of the Intermediate State.

As the Pentateuch is the great battle-ground of the Old Testament, so also are the Gospels of the New. Unbelief has strenuously endeavored to make out a clear case against the writings of the synoptists—first, on the ground that they are not genuine; second, they do not harmonize; third, the subject of them is a myth. With regard to the genuineness thereof, we may say the same as we have said regarding Isaiah and the prophecies ascribed to him. His character and style is indelibly stamped upon his writings, and we will find in the case of St. Luke's Gospel, where we understand that it was written by a physician, that the facts are the same, for it

scarcely requires a critical reader to discern, before he has covered many chapters, that the book has been written by a man of culture and keen discernment, endowed with scientific mind and logical perception.

The same may be said of the other Gospels, though not written by men of broad culture and anatomical knowledge, yet we find on learning the mannerisms of these persons that the writings correspond to a surprising degree with the peculiar characteristics possessed by the individuals themselves.

If, however, they had never been written by the authors to whom they are ascribed, and free-thought had proved this, yet the solid facts stand there with as steady a light, and as incontrovertible as ever. That four different men, in different places, at different times, and without any knowledge of each other's work, should write the same facts, though in different words, concerning the coming, work, death and resurrection of the Son of God, is an astounding proof of its divine inspiration.

Indeed, so conclusive is this evidence that it

would be a work of supererogation to produce any other. While running in this line we might touch upon the prophetic office of Christ which has been sneered at by carpers. He predicted the downfall of Jerusalem and the temple saying the day would surely come in which there would not be one stone left upon another, and when Judaism saw the city encompassed with Roman armies and soon beheld the abomination of desolations, it was convinced that the Messiah was a true prophet, and still more so when he foretold his death and resurrection; and true to it, he died at the hands of the Jewish rabble and arose again on the third day, thus proving his divine sonship, and turning the scornful sneers of his foes into wailings of woe.

He also established the doctrine of the Trinity by saying, "When I go away I will send the Holy Ghost the Comforter," and thus culminating that which was shadowed forth in crude form by pagan poets and philosophers and devotees, even Greek and Latin literature teeming with it. "O ye gods! The gods are propitious, the gods are angry," etc. This survey teaches us that the

genuineness, harmony and subject matter of these priceless writings is proven beyond cavil in the face of all mimeries of infidelity.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, a complete Triunity or Trinity. A plurality of persons in the Godhead was now an established doctrine, the conception or idea backed up by almost all peoples, even in barbarism, in direct antagonism to the monotheism of the heterodox as well as by the cultured Greeks and Latins mentioned above.

In the Gospels, however, Christ is the central figure, and it would be well for traducers and calumniators to note his character and work and make the comparison between it, and the conduct and fruit of infidelity.

On the one hand is the meek and lowly spirit, the patient resignation to the bitter inevitable, the loving sympathy and gentle Christian dignity of manner and bearing, that enabled him when reviled to revile not again; his tireless diligence and application to the work which his Father gave him to do. He fed the hungry, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, so

that their unscaled eyes beheld not only the glorified face of the Lamb of God, but also the hills, rocks and mountains of their native land. He unstopped the ears of the deaf, he caused the lame to leap as an hart, he enabled the mourner to rejoice, he shattered the chains that bound in unjust bondage the captive, he stood by the bier of the dead and commanded that they arise, and they in obedience to his mandate stood forth animate with life.

And now, on the other hand, we have the imperious carriage, arrogant assumption and blatant pretension of free-thought, which, instead of clothing the naked, and feeding the hungry, and comforting the comfortless, plays the part of the sneak thief by robbing humanity of that blissful and only hope that will cheer and sustain amid the difficulties of life, and enable the way-worn pilgrim to breast the storms of death.

One reason for the Gospels being selected as the battlefield of the New Testament, is not only because they treat of the life of the Messiah, but also they open up that great question relative to the condition of the dead, from the

time in which they depart from this world until they are finally judged. Skepticism sneeringly says it is only a parable which treats of this theme, and Lazarus is only a symbolical name. We admit all this, but great truths are taught, and great doctrines expounded by the use of parables and symbols. Then, veering off, unbelief says this fictitious person is a recognizable personality in the future world. This is also correct, leaving divine law out of the question altogether, and running along the line of natural law, philosophically speaking, the soul of man is the ego, the I, the self, the being or entire man, the body Rakkaos, as the early Greeks termed it, or the old ragged garment which was put off at death, enabling the man himself to enter the spirit world unencumbered, preserving his identity; and then when this cannot be successfully refuted, the cry is, "Oh! this is a condition in which the greatest sinner will be cleansed and finally occupy as high a place in the so-called heaven as the man whose life was blameless upon earth." The most superficial, however, will at once see that there is not a

single passage from Genesis to Revelation that will substantiate such assertions; but everywhere inspiration rings forth with clarion note, as death overtakes us, so will judgment find us.

We find, however, in spite of the sneers of the shallow-minded, and the differences of opinion that exist among even Christian people, that the doctrine of an intermediate state runs not only through the latter part of the sixteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, but also through many other passages of divine revelation, and disclosures of God's redeeming purposes are also made in parable and simile, as well as otherwise.

We find in the Old Testament the Hebrew term *sheol* occurring, the meaning of which is the grave, or abode of the departed spirits of the dead. Then, again, in the New Testament we have the Greek term *hades*, which also means the abode of the disembodied spirits of the dead, and in the Latin we have *limbo*, the dictionary meaning of which, from *limbus*, is border, edge, etc. Scholastic theology, however, has trimmed the schoolboy meaning down to a science, and

from being the edge or border of hell, it is a place of restraint or confinement for the souls of the departed, corresponding to the sheol of the Hebrew and the hades of the Greek ; also we have the paradise of the English, which means a place of felicity, or the habitation of joyous spirits.

Thus we find all through the sacred writings the striking analogy between the various terms, undoubtedly and indisputably used to represent the one state and condition. The question very naturally arises just at this stage, are the righteous compelled to associate with the wicked in this estate until the general judgment ? By no means ; that they are separated is clearly evident from St. Luke's teaching. In hell, or hades, or the intermediate state, Dives lifted up his eyes and beheld Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. We will more readily understand what is meant here when we know that the custom among Orientalists was to recline upon a couch at meals, and the head of the one at the end that came nearest the breast of the other was said to recline upon the bosom. This, then, is what is meant

by Lazarus being in Abraham's bosom—intimate companionship with that which was good, as in the eyes of Judaism the above mentioned patriarch always represented the wise and pure. Dives, then, was in that department of the intermediate state called gehenna, the idea of which was taken from the valley of Hinnom, outside Jerusalem, where fires were kept continually burning to destroy the refuse of the city. It was in this condition and place that the wicked were reserved in chains of darkness, awaiting the judgment of the great day, as inspiration tersely says. The meaning of the chains being restraint, they were held under authority and power, separated from the good, that would continue until the final assize.

Again, when the suffering Dives saw Lazarus in the companionship of Abraham or the good, he desired that he come and comfort him, but was informed that there was a great gulf fixed so that none could pass from the one department to the other, practically meaning there could be no contact between the good and evil.

Thus we find all through the Scriptures the

doctrine of an intermediate state taught as clearly as the shining of the meridian sun at the noontide hour. As further proof, however, of this great truth, in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and the thirty-first verse, we have the Apostle testifying of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption, the true meaning of which is, his soul was not left in hades or the intermediate state, as the term hell here represents, and his flesh did not see corruption, as he rose again the third day after his crucifixion, and decomposition had not set in to corrupt his flesh, as the body lay in a rock-hewn sepulchre, cooling the atmosphere, thus preventing an early decay.

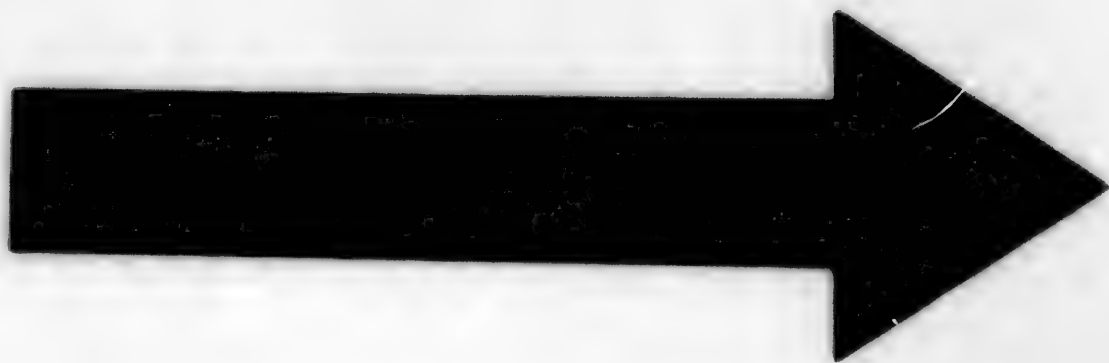
Then again, after his resurrection, he said to those who pressed upon him to touch him, "Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father," his own words here proving that the abode of his soul during those three eventful days was not the heaven of heavens, but hades.

Again, during the crucifixion agony, our Lord

turned to the repentant thief upon the cross to hear him cry, "Lord, remember me when thou enterest into thy kingdom;" and the Saviour said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," the equivalent of sheol, hades and limbo, meaning unquestionably the intermediate state.

In closing this chapter we may just add that it would not be in accordance with the matchless wisdom of the divine and eternal God, immediately upon the death of the righteous or wicked, to assign them to the final heaven, or the final hell, and after they had enjoyed the felicity of that most exalted estate on the one hand, and on the other suffered the torments of the damned for incalculable ages, call them forth and judge them to see what condition they were fitted for. The ridiculousness of this is at once apparent when we know that he who is too wise to err performs no works of supererogation.

It is, however, comforting to all believers to know that where the followers of the slain Redeemer are, there is their Master with them, even in the intermediate state, and that glorified presence makes its felicity second only to that



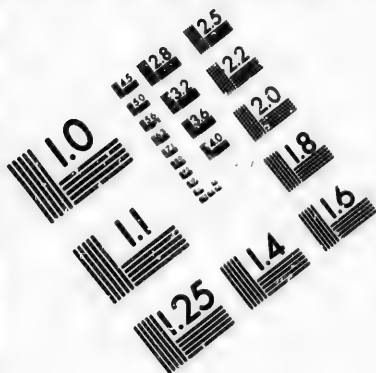
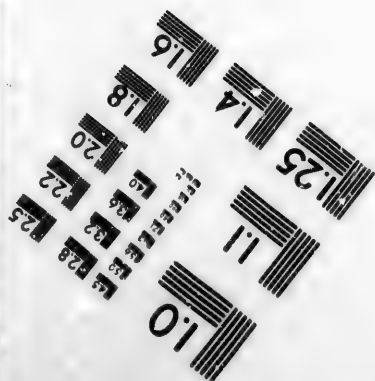
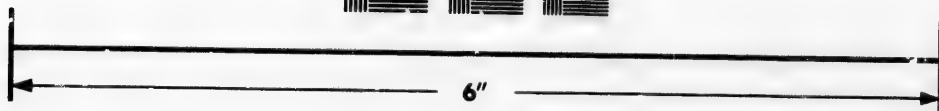
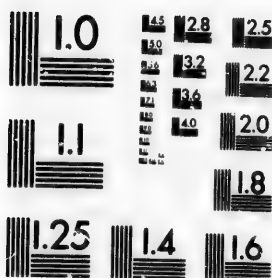


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of the courts above. Comforting, indeed, are the words of the heavenly-minded Paul to the Hebrew Christians: "For ye are come"—not ye shall come—but "ye are come to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Wherever the spirit of God truly" . . . dwells, with believing, trustful children, there is the millennial glory manifest, there is heaven. Needless is it for either the sceptic or the old-fashioned theologian to ransack space or to explore the star-spangled firmament for that which will exist within their own bosoms if they humble themselves as little children and simply let the Saviour in.

CHAPTER II.

The Doctrine of the Resurrection.

FREE-THOUGHT has also with fiery ardour assailed the doctrine of the resurrection, which is one of the great fundamental truths of the New Testament. Indeed, modern infidelity is but the re-echo of ancient Sadduceeism, which declared that there was no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit, that the teaching of the prophetic schools was simply a fable; practically, there was no hereafter. We are surprised that the facts which they produce, and the dogmas they presume to teach are in nowise up to date, nor are they at all suited to the developed condition of thought in this border-land of the millennium. Their belief, their arguments, are more than two thousand years old, and can now safely be classed as obsolete. Unlike the worn-out theories of skepticism, however, we have all around us, in

the glorious springtime, convincing and conclusive evidence of resurrection life—the budding trees, the springing grass, the blooming flowers all proving with the genius and power of a master the actual existence of the principle itself—no votary of unbelief can disprove this—from the death of winter to the life of spring.

Then that which was taught by Christ himself had already proved itself, like a mathematical problem, being demonstrated in nature.

Many think that the incarnation is the great pivot upon which everything swings; we, however, beg to take exception to such teaching, and affirm that the resurrection of the Son of God is the great central truth upon which the whole fabric rests.

It must be borne in mind that Christ was the greatest of all prophets, predicting his own death, and, above all, the momentous truth, that on the third day he would rise again. All will at once see that, as the rabble ridiculed him in his death, saying, "He saved others, himself he cannot save," and classed him with impostors and shams, that to them the fulfilment of his

own prediction was, or would be, the proof of his divine sonship. When he spoke of raising up the temple—meaning his body—in three days, those who heard his words thought he referred to that great stone fabric in Jerusalem, set apart for sacrifice and worship, and said, accordingly, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and will you rear it up again in three days?" But the Saviour spake of the temple of his body, and, to the astonishment of his traducers, on the third day he burst the barriers of the tomb, and appeared unto men, confounding skepticism in every form, and proving himself beyond all cavil and doubt to be the Son of the eternal God.

Then Christ became the first-fruits of them that slept, the proof to Sadduceeism, the proof to the world, that apart from nature there was a resurrection of the dead.

In the twenty-third verse of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul says, under inspiration, "But every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." According to the

teaching of this verse, there are three resurrections or orders in the *anastasis*, or standing or rising up. In the first order, we have the God-man; in the second, the martyrs or confessors, or all those who died in the triumphs of faith; whilst in the third we have those who died in their sins—all in their own order.

Some doubter, however, says, "This does not agree with the sixth verse of the twentieth chapter of Revelation": "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." It must be remembered that the last book which the Bible contains is a book of types and symbols; but every type and every symbol of revelation teaches an antitype and a reality; thus, if this passage did not exactly harmonize with the other we would simply assume that it taught some new phase of this great doctrine. But it does harmonize in every particular.

The apostle, in using this symbolical language, takes it for granted that as Christ was

the first-fruits of resurrection life, it is only necessary to mention the leading orders, the other is understood. Then the first, properly speaking, is the rising or standing up of the saints of the Most High; the second, the unrighteous. It is at once apparent that there is no contradiction or discrepancy here.

Again, this typical passage may be applied in another sense; spiritually speaking, the first resurrection may be the raising of man from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. This is what we meant by saying, in a former paragraph, that perhaps the verse in Revelation was designed to disclose some new aspect of the question to the enquiring mind.

To strengthen the spiritual construction which we have placed upon it, the passage, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," shows that there is a resurrection from sin to righteousness—the sin classed as death. Then, "Blessed and holy are they that have part in Christ's resurrection," which was the first; the second, as formerly, that of the wicked. Thus, looking at the

matter as we may from any standpoint, there is not a single discordant note sounded; even in its different shades of meaning there is perfect and absolute harmony. This unison all along the lines is a heavy blow to unbelief, which, though determined, if possible, to accomplish it, yet cannot produce anything that upon thorough investigation will not appear in perfect accord with the teachings of Holy Writ upon the same subject elsewhere.

Resurrection is always preceded by death. As an example of this, we have the grain of wheat that must perish before a blade is produced. It is true, however, that the germ of life exists; but this does not alter the conditions. The blade or body itself dies, and out of the decomposed matter, or out of the death of the seed, life is produced.

Many intelligent, thoughtful people, reasoning along the lines of natural law, believe that in the human body there is a seminal principle, which, upon the death and decomposition of the body, will, on the principle of the grain of corn, spring into life, and thus produce the resurrec-

tion body. This is so philosophical that we will not attempt to controvert it; and, furthermore, we believe that infidelity in its most audacious form will find some difficulties in the way of successfully disproving a resurrection of the body along these lines.

In the case of the potato we have also the same principle manifest—there is the death of the body before life in the form of the stalk is produced; indeed, we find a complete decomposition of the body that feeds and nourishes the germ before life is noticeably manifest.

But why should it be necessary to reason this out along materialistic lines, when the Judge of all the earth has power sufficient to raise up a body, or reproduce it, even though it has been cut into the smallest particles in the dissecting-room; and yet the Power that rolls the stars along, and that speaks all the promises, can do it in a moment's space, or in a point of time, if necessary. There is no general principle required for Him to work upon, who has so frequently by sign, and wonder, and miracle, confounded Pharisaism and Sadduceeism with

every other form or system of hypocrisy, error and unbelief.

In the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians and thirty-sixth verse, these words occur, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die." Thomas Paine, in his greatest work, "The Age of Reason," makes one of his most furious attacks upon the teaching of this verse, saying, that where quickening occurs, or where the principle of life exists, there has been no death. Lucretius, one of the most noted of recent atheists, furnishes a spectacle for angels and men by exploding the teaching of Paine on this principle. It is not alone merely the extraneous matter which perishes, leaving the substance intact, as Mr. Paine reasons, but the entire lobe or body decays, even though the germ of life remains; it springs up into a new condition, such as from the grain of corn the blade, the ear, the multitude of new grains in the ear. Then any process or stage through which a material substance passes, that effects such a change, or transformation, or new order or condition, is equivalent to death, and is death.

This at once evidences the fact, without any further comment, that whether willingly or not, atheism has in this matter taken sides with us and annihilated one of the leading arguments of infidelity.

As we have now shown that in the grain fields, in the forests, in the parks, gardens, and in man himself there are evidences not only of the principle, but also of the process of resurrection, we turn to the teachings of Christ himself for a suitable climax for the thoughts which have been expressed in this chapter.

He who proved to the astonished millions of earth, not only his own divinity, but also the truth of resurrection doctrine, manifested his stupendous power, apart from natural law and materialistic agency, in commanding dead Lazarus to come forth from the tomb, and, in obedience to that mandate, the sleeper arose and stood before his Lord. The sister Martha was a little skeptical when the Saviour in ineffable tenderness said, "Thy brother shall rise again." "I know," said she, "that he shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day." Christ, however,

by his act, wondrous in its import, soon scattered the vapoury clouds of skepticism upon the winds of heaven, while at the same time his words, fraught with divine consolation, fell like Gilead's healing balm upon a wounded soul: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." And Martha, when asked if she believed this, no longer trammelled by doubt or hesitancy, said, "Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ the son of God."

The rising God forsakes the tomb,
 The tomb in vain forbids his rise,
 Cherubic legions guard him home,
 And shout him welcome to the skies.

Break off your tears, ye saints, and tell
 How high your Great Deliverer reigns;
 Sing how he spoiled the hosts of hell,
 And led the monster death in chains.

Say, Live forever wondrous King!
 Born to redeem and strong to save;
 Then ask the monster, Where's thy sting,
 And where's thy victory, boasting Grave.

CHAPTER III.

The Meaning, Exercise, and Triumph of Faith.

THE next great existent truth that we shall deal with is Faith. The question very naturally arises, What is it? Perhaps we had better go to the very foundation of the matter. Faith comes from the root-word *fidere*, to trust, and is, properly speaking, a belief in the truth of that which is disclosed to us, or a confidence in the existence of those things which are unseen, such as in the universal government of the universe by a Supreme Being, and the inspiration of the Scriptures.

As we have shown in the previous chapter that resurrection is a self-evident fact, we find it taught and illustrated all around us, and the very process being demonstrated before our eyes every day we breathe the vital air, we shall now endeavor to show that faith is also an existent principle. The preceding doctrine was taught

largely in nature; this is more strongly set forth in art. One of the most glorious sights that has ever been witnessed by the children of men has been that of nature and art united, in endorsing the truths of Almighty God, and in annihilating the boastful but empty teachings of infidelity.

Christ, the greatest preacher of any age, continually illustrated his themes from nature, thus proving to intelligent, observing men, as well as to the simplest and most illiterate, that his teachings were true; they could see their truth in the nature by which they were illuminated.

Thus his kingly power and enduring system is not only seen and understood in the Greek inscription on the arch of the Mohammedan mosque in far-off Damascus, that has withstood the storms of more than twelve centuries, and that seems miraculously preserved, and which translated into the English, is the following: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations," but it is also seen in forest glades, among storm-beaten rocks, mean-

dering streams and on smiling, verdant plains. Also in our crowded centres of population we have not only that which teaches us of the tremendous and illimitable power of him who guides the starry host to purposes of beneficence and glory, and who doeth according to his will among the innumerable armies of the skies, but also evidences of the existence of that great primal instinct, shall we call it, philosophically speaking, which is the central truth of this chapter.

St. Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, eleventh chapter and first verse, clearly defines the nature of faith, and it will interest us to see the difference between the secular and philosophical meaning, as given in the beginning of this chapter, and the meaning applied to it by logical Paul under inspiration, just here: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." From this the Apostle of the Gentile world goes on to show that through the exercise of this principle worlds were framed, sacrifices were offered unto God, Enoch was translated, Noah prepared the ark,

Abraham obeyed God, Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, Moses was hidden by his parents; by faith also he forsook Egypt, and kept the passover and sprinkling of blood lest they be destroyed with the firstborn. Through the exercise of it they passed through the Red Sea; by it the walls of Jericho fell down, and inspiration finishes up with the matchless climax: "Through faith Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephtha, David, Samuel and the prophets subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

Turning now to those things which come more directly under our observation, we will find that in all matters we have evidence of the existence of that without which man can accomplish nothing. The husbandman sows his seed trustfully believing that what with the warm sunshine and fertilizing showers there will be a bounteous harvest. The lawyer has confidence in his knowledge of law, and in his

ability to plead the cause of his client, that he may secure his acquittal. With this faith strong within him he unhesitatingly takes the case in hand. The physician also has graduated in medicine, and knows the proper use of drugs and the peculiar medicines that are suited to certain diseases, so that when the call has come to hasten to the sick-room the practitioner obeys with alacrity, feeling that he can make a correct diagnosis of the trouble, and confident that his drugs will effect the desired cure. The merchant purchases his wares, perhaps, in the foreign market, either himself or his agent making the selection; they are placed on sale with the confidence that they are good value for the price demanded, and that they will have a ready sale.

Thus all along we find this principle of faith being exercised, even in the monumental piles and stately public edifices by which we are surrounded. The architect in every case called into play the exercise of this wondrous force, believing that when his work was completed it would bear any strain which might be put upon

it and defy the storms of the approaching years. Vain is it, then, for freethought to deny the existence of that which is everywhere manifest, and which has been implanted in the personality of man by the power and mercy of the eternal God.

The exercise or non-exercise of this principle of which we now write, has exalted nations to thrones of power, or irrevocably sealed their fate and fixed their doom. The careful student of history will see that with faith battles were fought and won; without it, dynasties tottered to their fall.

During the American civil war we had given us a splendid example of a simple trust which gave to the Union arms a great and crowning victory, and which, although its armies afterward fought victorious battles, virtually broke the back of the Confederacy. Colonel Deveraux, who had been put in the command of a small brigade composed of two regiments, without having received any orders to warrant his conduct, at once placed them in reserve behind the main line, and out of action at the battle of

Gettysburg. After one of the most tremendous cannonades that has ever been known in the annals of warfare, and which demoralized the Federal advanced lines, Pickett's division made its famous charge, and was sweeping everything before it, storming battery after battery, when Deveraux ordered his two regiments to charge through the breaking Federal lines upon the advancing rebels. At the double quick, and with a wild shout, the men dashed upon their foes, and snatched from them the victory which they had almost won.

The colonel, in speaking of it afterward, said, "I have in the past been a hard-headed, skeptical man, but somehow or other, when I stationed my men in the rear of the lines of battle, I felt and trusted that Almighty God would so overrule things that they would be of most service there, and my faith was rewarded, no doubt by the God of Israel, by their being able at the supreme moment, from their advantageous position, to strike a crushing blow and save the Union." Thus we have here the striking testimony of a successful soldier, who had scarcely

ever given religion a passing thought, as to the efficacy of the exercise of faith in God in a tremendous crisis.

And now, finally, let us see what the relationship of infidelity is to this principle which it affects to despise, and which it tries to hold up to the ridicule of the world. As we look critically into the matter, we discover the fact that free-thought is between two fires, and turn which way it will it is scorched. On the one hand, if it is sincere and true to conviction, it exercises the very faith which it denounces in its own belief and teachings, whilst, on the other, if it does not utilise this trust, or practise this faith and principle, it is a pretentious sham. Thus viewing it as we will, the entire system either gives the lie to its own teachings by its practice, or brands itself as being one of the greatest deceptions of the age.

We find in spite of the machinations of the superficial votaries of a system, which is the very embodiment of surface arrogance, that the great fundamental principle which we teach in this chapter is a sheet-anchor to the soul of man, both

sure and steadfast; that when the storm of life is at its height, the tempest raging with terrific violence, the lightnings flashing in streaks of living fire and seeming to rend the skies, the thunders rolling and breaking forth into deafening peals, proclaiming themselves the artillery of God; the spars crash upon the deck, the masts go by the board, the sails are torn to ribbons, the vessel heaves and tosses upon the seething billows, until at last it is but a shattered hulk. But that anchor has never dragged, its flukes have never lost their grip beneath the swirling waters. Behind the raging seas, the storm-swept rocks, the flaming heavens, the broadsides of the skies standeth God within his temple, ever watching over his own. Fear not, little flock, it applies to all trustful souls everywhere, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Swiftly doth the day approach in the which faith shall be lost in sight in seeing him who is now the invisible, but who shall soon appear.

The teaching of the inspired volume, which we here endorse and defend, is rightly termed the word of faith, which is to the storm-tossed

mariner a lighthouse equipped with the most powerful flash-light, amid the encircling gloom of earthly night. In grief's dark day it sheds a radiance that becomes, through the touch of the wand of God, a halo of glory around the head of the afflicted, suffering child of the heavenly King. In joy's brief morn it inundates the soul with billows of glory, and when the joys and griefs of earth are experienced and known no more, in the light of resurrection jubilation, it shall be the pavement of gold upon which our spiritual feet shall tread.

CHAPTER IV.

Regeneration as set forth in the Writings of St. Paul.

ST. PAUL'S writings have not received the attention from freethinkers that some might expect; this is in some measure, at least, due to the fact that they are largely doctrinal and historical, and are proved not only by human experience but also by history's pages. The passage that has been singled out for the most vigorous assaults is the seventh verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians, and to this great cardinal doctrine of the writings of the Apostle of the Gentile world we shall devote the entire chapter: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ."

There are things, if the use of philosophical terms will be permitted, which are unthinkable and ununderstandable; perhaps one of these is

the term peace. In its relationship to the affairs of life in a material sense, we can form some conception of its meaning, and perhaps the better way to correctly apprehend the spiritual is to analyze the secular.

Strife is an abnormal condition in direct contradistinction to the principles which are the foundation-stones of Christ's kingdom. The chief end of man is not to fabricate discord, or stir up those sentiments which pits man against his fellow, but is, on the contrary, "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever." Then the counterpart of strife, or that condition which is diametrically opposed to it, is the state covered by the above-mentioned term. The logical outgrowth of the above teaching at once gives the conception of the true meaning in a secular sense, which applies not so much to man in the singular number as to men in the plural. Perhaps philosophy will analyze the principle in this way: Peace is that condition of felicity by which we know that we know, and this stage of assured knowledge reached, we have the exclusion of harassing thought and perplexing doubt which leaves us

in the situation, materialistically speaking, in which the ego, I, or self is perfectly composed regarding surrounding discords.

Let us take the waters of the ocean when in commotion during the prevalence of a gale. At the conclusion of the storm who would think of using the term peace to describe the opposite of agitation; the term calm is invariably and correctly used. And then peace brings joy; the two are associated together in the Word of God; calm following a warring of the elements or discordance may not necessarily bring peace. At the close of the Crimean war, when peace was proclaimed, the world had a splendid demonstration of the true meaning of the principle, and the joy that the Bible associated with it immediately followed. All London went wild with transports of delight, and when at last the shattered regiments that had borne the shock of battle and withstood the onslaught of fevers and disease filed through the streets of the world's metropolis, cheer upon cheer resounded on every hand making the very welkin ring. All the result of peace in a material form.

Then, if peace in a worldly sense means this, and leads to joy almost shoreless as infinity, what must be the meaning of spiritual peace, the peace of God spoken of in our text. Ask one and another of the children of the heavenly King if they can describe it, if they can understand it, and they say with one accord they cannot, but they know that through Christ they possess it. If, then, we possess it, and yet cannot analyze it, it adds additional force to the words of God's own inspiration, it "passeth all understanding."

If this state or condition is so heavily freighted with that which is blessed, that it cannot be understood, it commends itself unto us. Let us, then, as mortal creatures, come with boldness unto a throne of heavenly grace, and as we come, the heavenly guest shall enter and fill us with the indescribable.

Again, this peace that we have endeavoured to discuss, but which passeth understanding, fills the heart, which, in a material sense, is the seat of life. It is a hollow, muscular organ filling the cavity between the lungs, and is divided into

four compartments, the right and left auricle and the right and left ventricle. The blood flows along the great veins into the auricles, and is forced by the contraction of muscular walls into the ventricles, through valves situated between the auricles and ventricles, and then with the distension of the ventricles their muscular walls contract and force the blood into the arteries. But how can peace affect this wonderful organ, with the blood dashing through its valves and occupied in furnishing the life fluids to the arterial system?

But on a more critical investigation of the matter, and on closer consideration, we are impressed with the thought that the heart, as understood by the anatomist, and the heart of our text, are two widely different creations.

The heart of man, in a scriptural or philosophical sense, is his personality; then the peace of God which passeth understanding shall fill our personality or entire being. May we seek after it with intense earnestness.

During the progress of the recent South African boom, with what terrible earnestness

men sought after gold; a few found it, but the great mass in bitter disappointment turned away without the coveted treasure. Men may seek along the lines of the materialistic, but there is no promise or certainty that they shall find; but to those who seek after the things which pertain to their everlasting peace, lo! they have the promise of One in whom is vested royal power, that those who seek shall find.

This peace also does more than fill the heart, it fills the mind. It is said by many that the brain is the organ of mind. This is, however incorrect, for the mind finds an organ in the entire organism. The whole system furnishes material for the building up of man's mental structure.

This is proven by the elaborate system of nerves, which is two-fold, namely the cerebro-spinal and sympathetic. The latter is undoubtedly the special organ of the emotional nature, as its name implies. The cerebro-spinal, which shows a direct and complicated connection with mind, is divisible into two parts, a central and peripheral. The central is found in the brain,

and is of a greyish color, made up of minute cells. The other portion, which connects the centres and extremities, is white in color and consists of strands of fibres running to every part of the organism. There are two groups of these—one, which springs from each side of the front of the spine, carrying impulses from the centre outwards, and the other, which issues from the back of the spine, carrying impulses inward, exciting sensation. These nerves of sensation are perpetually carrying to the brain impressions which have been excited in the different organs. Thus, whatever organ, no matter how remote from the brain, receives an impression, it is instantly transmitted over this wonderful telegraphic system, and affects that organ in some particular way. Then the mind, not so much the brain, is the controlling power.

The ego, the I, the self, the mind, the soul, is the man, the body but the clothing; and now if the mind is the entire man, this peace with God which fills the heart or entire personality, also fills the mind of the true man, the two terms with their comprehensive

meaning being used by the inspired Paul to show the completeness and absoluteness of that filling.

Also let us notice that there must be an emptying of self, and of everything that is antagonistic to the true spirit of Christianity. This filling cannot take place until the emptying has taken place, and then when God has shown us our inefficiency, we begin to realize that our sufficiency is alone of him, and we open our hearts and minds for the reception of Christ, and with him comes that peace that passeth understanding. All this, the text teaches us, is through Jesus Christ. Regeneration is through him. We cannot in this way approach the Father except through the eternal Son, St. John clearing up the mystery by saying under inspiration what Christ taught: "I am the Way and no man cometh unto me except through the Father." The world looked for the expected and predicted Messiah, believing, at least to a certain extent, that through him great things were going to transpire. His advent was heralded by angelic messengers hovering upon swift wing over Beth-

lehem's stable, and true to predictive utterance he came, the pledge of a finished salvation, and through him the world was redeemed, all things through Christ.

All that we are, we are alone through him ; all that we possess, we possess through him ; all that we hope to be, we will be through Christ alone. As we consider and discuss this matter, we revert to the words of God's own inspiration, " Christ the all and in all."

The work of the greatest reformers of the ages has been done through Christ. Men imbued with his spirit have gone forth into the world, and have revolutionized society and politics ; others filled with the same spirit have gone forth in the militant Church, and by the exercise of powers sanctified of God have done valiantly.

The immortal Wesley, after a life of wonderful self-sacrifice and devotion to the interest and well-being of his fellow-men, and after founding and establishing a mighty sect, and by the purifying effect of his evangelistic labours saving England, as one of her greatest

statesmen himself admitted, testified to the fact in the evening time of life that all he had been enabled to accomplish was alone through Christ. Our only hope of ultimate victory is through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

If we have had smooth sailing over a glassy sea in the past, we must not allow ourselves to be deluded into the belief that the waters will always be unruffled, for rest assured that sometime during our mortal pilgrimage tempests will gather black as night and the waters of life's ocean will be lashed into fury. But fear not, Christian mariner; he that sitteth above the water-floods will not permit them to overflow thee. Ah! once again through Christ there is safety. The storms that will prevail may be of sorrow because of loss of health or property. In the former case, perhaps, we have ignorantly or otherwise violated the laws of Nature; if so, we must expect to suffer, and if suffering comes we must not marvel at the mysterious Providence, as we will doubtless persist in calling it, that afflicted us, or permitted affliction to come upon us. Along the lines of natural law we

are but suffering the penalty for infraction of law, and must not foolishly charge God in connection with the matter. Or, in the latter case, if property is swept away, perhaps it is but the result of indiscretion or lack of judgment in making bad investments, or foolishness in endorsing worthless paper or gambling in stocks. If so, we need not be surprised that disappointment and loss have come upon us. But in the midst of remorse and galling bitterness of soul the immortal hope is ours, and that through Christ, that after the night of weeping, joy cometh in the morning.

Also, in the midst of bereavement, when the feet of the ghastly messenger have pressed the threshold and his mytic knock is heard upon the portal, and the sacred tie is sundered and the best loved of all is gone from earth away, the causes that led to this saddest period of all have perhaps been many; a lack of substantial, nourishing food, or insufficient clothing has perhaps induced a run-down condition of the system that left the subject susceptible to the inroads of mortal disease. It came, and with it

the rider of the Pale Horse, and as the members of that stricken family stand around the open grave and behold the coffined clay of their beloved dead depart from mortal vision, hidden by the clods of the valley, they say they cannot understand this terrible Providence, forgetting the fact that they themselves, by improvident conduct, have hastened the death of the one so much lamented.

But what a manifestation of the boundless and shoreless mercy of our God; he does not upbraid or reprimand them for their ignorance, or thoughtlessness, or carelessness, or lack of thrift, but cheers them as they lay away their dead, with the knowledge that what they have just beheld, and that has awed them so much, is gain infinite and eternal; and the hope becomes dominant in every breast that one day they shall outride the storms of life and in the companionship of the departed, walk the golden streets of the city of God—all this through Jesus Christ.

Then, instead of blaming Providence for calamities that we bring upon ourselves, let us

seek to avoid disaster by trusting fully in a Saviour who will, if any man lack wisdom and ask of him, give of his rich abundance and upbraid not; and if we trust him fully, and receive this wisdom which cometh from God out of heaven, we shall triumph over every foe.

But many say, We would open our hearts and minds for the reception of this peace which passeth understanding if it were not for temptation; we fear that we could not withstand, it comes in so many varied forms, and we had rather not start in the service of God than commence and fail. We answer right here, there is no need whatever of failure. What we need is to cast our mistrust and skepticism to the winds of heaven, and simply taking the Saviour at his word, throw ourselves fully upon him, and he will not turn us empty away; and then rings forth the golden promise, "I will not suffer you to be tempted more than that which you are able to bear, but will in every temptation make a way for your escape."

All through the ages, as we ransack the pages of profane history as well as ecclesiastical,

courage with discretion was master upon every field ; and the child of God needs a heaven-born hope, enabling him to confront the forces of evil in the world, armed with the Spirit's two-edged sword, and at last to stand victorious upon the embattlements of God, through Jesus Christ.

To him that overcometh ! oh, word divinely strong,
The victor's palm, the fadeless wreath, th grand immortal song ;
And his the hidden manna, and his the polished stone,
Within whose whiteness shines that name revealed to him alone.

To him that overcometh ! oh, promise dearest, dear,
The Lord of heaven who died himself shall evermore be near ;
Here dust upon his garments, there robes that royal be,
For in the palace of the King, saith Christ, mine own shall dwell with me.

We in concluding this chapter would say to unbelief in every form, give up your shallow and fruitless attacks upon those profound passages which no earth-born plummet line can

ever fathom, and which no mind except that enlightened of God can ever understand, and even though your sins of ignorance, as well as sins of omission and commission, have been of crimson dye, they shall, by the renunciation of the false and the acceptance of the true, become white as the new-fallen snow.

CHAPTER V.

Failure of Infidelity and Victory of Christianity.

OF the Book of Revelation we need say nothing. Infidelity says it is but a shadow. To this we at once assent, but go a step farther, and say that even free-thought has to admit when hard pressed that there cannot exist a shadow without there being a substance somewhere behind. There must be a cause for everything; the cause of the shadow is the existence of the substance, which shuts off the light rays and brings about the consequent effect. Thus the shadows of Revelation prove the existence of astounding realities. The first verse of the first chapter contains the key to the entire book: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it" (or signed or symbolized it) "by his angel unto his servant John." This

needs no further comment, and we shall now proceed to define the meaning of that system which we combat in these pages.

Infidelity is unfaithfulness, or disloyalty, or disbelief. It may exist in connection with the family, the State, or God and sacred things. The scope of this work, however, will not allow of any discussion along the line of the family or State, but solely with disbelief in the divine government, and God as its head, except in so far as the others are related thereto, as will be seen later. John Knox said that free-thought was the essence of vanity, and none knew better than the great Reformer the worthlessness of its principles. It is also humanitarianism, the worship of the human above the divine. The ego, the first personal pronoun I, is right, everything else is wrong. Perhaps the true meaning in a nutshell of infidelity is the worship of the individual intellect, and the Lord help the intellect when its arguments are investigated.

The effect of free-thought also has been baneful in the extreme in its relationship to human society. The writings of Voltaire and Rousseau

swept like the simoon's blast, it is said, over the face of sunny France, blasting the spiritual life of the nation like a full-blown flower in a November frost. The effect of these principles, which were scattered broadcast over the land, was soon seen in the people putting down all constitutional authority, erecting and worshipping the image of a painted prostitute representing the Goddess of Liberty, elevating Robespierre upon his bloody tribunal, the institution of the guillotine, through the agency of which the heads of France's best citizens rolled in the dust, and the inauguration of the Reign of Terror.

Free-thought also is not only an enemy to the State and the family, which is the State in miniature, but to education and the dissemination of knowledge generally, that is, true knowledge. By the destruction of the Church, which it aims at, will collapse the entire educational system of the commonwealth, as such system is fostered by the Church on the principle that the Church and school always go together.

And now we pass on to notice the dying

utterances of the representatives of such an institution. Thomas Paine said in his last hours, addressing the nurse who waited upon him, "What did you do with the book which I gave you"? namely, "The Age of Reason." "I burned it," said the attendant. "I would to God," said the dying man, "that everyone who received it had done likewise, for if ever Satan had a hand in the writing of a book he had in that." Voltaire died blaspheming God, acknowledging by those very blasphemies that he believed in the existence of a Supreme Being, thus giving the lie to his life's work. Colonel Charteris said when dying, "I would gladly give my entire fortune, £30,000 sterling, to have it proved to my satisfaction that there was no such place as hell." Lord Byron, one of the most gifted of infidel writers, said, as the mists of death were gathering in his eyes:

"My days are in the yellow leaf;
 The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
 The worm, the canker, and the grief
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With free-thought there is nothing but cowering and shrinking amid the gathering shadows of dissolution, and unspeakable horror at the prospect of meeting the Judge of all the earth.

We now pass from this awful portraiture of wretchedness and misery to the sublimer picture of Christianity and the Christian. Here we have a system incarnated without arrogance or pretension, beginning as the little stone cut out of the mountain without hands, but, lo! it has filled the whole earth. With civilization on the one hand and an immortal hope on the other, it has gone forth stimulating education, refining base and crude natures, elevating principalities, powers, and kingdoms into national greatness, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting and comforting the sick and disconsolate, encouraging commerce, building hospitals, establishing asylums and homes for the friendless and homeless, and in numberless ways adding to the prosperity and greatness and usefulness of nations and individuals, making thrones and dynasties enduring and governmental systems stable, and strengthening the bonds that hold the

social fabric together, destroying license, corruption and impurity in every form, cleansing society, exalting character, and fostering thrift and industry.

Also with regard to the death of its representatives, its sons and daughters die well. Dean Stanley said when dying, "Thanks be unto him who has given us victory, through Christ our Lord." Charles Wesley, the sacred bard of Methodism, uttered these sublime words when about to abandon the tabernacle of clay, "I shall awake, I shall awake on the morning of the resurrection in Christ's likeness." John Calvin, the founder of a great system of theology that bears his name, said, "Switzerland's God is my God, and my everlasting portion." John Wesley, the founder and builder of eighteenth century reform, said in his closing hours, "The best of all is, God is with us." Alfred Cookman, when passing away, shouted in ecstasy, "I am sweeping through the gates of the New Jerusalem, washed in the blood of the Lamb." Dr. Carey, the apostle of India, said, as his feet touched the waters of the mystic

river, "I join hands in spirit with the ransomed souls upon the banks of the Ganges and Irrawaddy, and together we sing of victory and triumph, through him who has redeemed us."

With Christianity we find none of the pessimistic doubt and discouragement and darkness of infidelity; but on the contrary, we have the radiant optimism of hope, the triumphant testimony of victorious trust, and after the noise of earthly strife the victor's song and the conqueror's wreath.

No such jubilant note ever burst from lips of war-worn, victorious battalions on battle plains, as that which broke from the lips of Elizabeth Wallbridge, the dairyman's daughter, and Margaret Fuller, the maiden martyr of Scotland, as the silver cord was loosed, and their ransomed spirits were ushered into the audience chamber of the King, to behold him in his beauty.

As we trace infidelity from its embryotic stage down to the present time, we find that it has accomplished nothing in the way of ameliorating the condition of the human race, but the tendency from its natal hour has been to

blast and to destroy. It pointed all its batteries, with guns shotted to the muzzles, at the inspired volume, but although at times the bombardment was tremendous, the sacred page has withstood that fire of hell, and to-day, with greater power and influence than ever before, continues to mould and fashion the hearts and lives of the sons of men in a manner that fits them for membership in the Church triumphant.

"Ask of me," saith God, "and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possessions." The Christian world has asked concerning this matter, and already in response Ethiopia has stretched out her hands toward God, and the islands of the sea break forth with glad acclaim to him who liveth forever and ever, because of the wondrous baptism of his grace. The cannibalistic tribes of the empire of the Southern seas have given up their demoniacal orgies, and started out in the pursuit of those things which pertain to their everlasting peace, and the words of Charles Darwin, the great specialist and naturalist, strike us with convincing power, "I

cannot reason it out along the line of natural development; it must have come about by some demonstration of divine power, yea through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity of God."

What a blazing light the Gospel of Christ has proved in a dark world. Mankind amid the clouds of the mountain has seen that wondrous light, and has been elevated heavenward thereby. Humanity in the valley of sin has seen it, and with an immortal hope has lifted up its head, amid the sunburst of the skies. Blessed Scriptures of divine truth, pregnant with sacred wisdom, and fringed with the golden hues of eternal life, they taught the flaming herald of the Gentile world how to die, they taught young Timothy the ways of God and of salvation. Occident and Orient have opened up their golden gates, and lo! that impregnable rock of Scripture truth, which has proved agnosticism to be the know-nothing of its original, which has swamped atheism, annihilated infidelity and free-thought, has shone as a lamp of life amid the encircling gloom.

THE END.

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